

THE HOPEWELL CAMPBELL MOUND, CLARK COUNTY, OHIO

by
Robert N. Converse
199 Converse Drive
Plain City, Ohio

In 1935 Arthur Altick, who was associated with the Clark County Historical Society, excavated one of a group of mounds on the property of Philip H. Campbell. This complex was named the Campbell Group in honor of the land owner.

The Campbell Group is located in Bethel Township, Clark County, Ohio, on the west side of Donnel's Creek at its junction with Mad River. The complex consisted of three small mounds and a "dipper-shaped" enclosure. Altick began his excavations in the

summer of 1935. The following narrative is an excerpt taken from *The Archaeology of Clark County* a pamphlet written by David Collins, an attorney of Springfield, Ohio.

Mr. Altick's excavation of the Campbell Mounds in 1935 disclosed a number of extended burials enclosed in boxlike structures composed of limestone slabs. Also found were several cremated burials. Some artifacts, found in the Campbell Mounds, were in association with burials; others were in apparent isolation. A large chipped blade of gray Indiana chert was found on a pyramidal structure composed of limestone slabs and described by Mr. Altick as an altar. Also found were a small slate gorget, numerous sherds of pottery, a modified rectangular tablet cut from mica, and several ornaments fashioned from canine teeth of bear which had been ground so as to give them a rectangular, rather than the naturally oval cross section. Each of these exhibits two perforations, drilled from one side only into the nerve duct

The artifacts recovered by Altick are interesting. Although he did not know it at the time, they are most certainly Hopewell. The drilled bear teeth are especially diagnostic of that culture but are unique in some respects and deserve additional description and explanation.

The Campbell Mound's drilled bear teeth are peculiarly different than most other Hopewell examples. The teeth from the Campbell mound have been, for some strange reason, ground flat - both front and back, and as with the better known Hopewell drilled bear teeth, they are perforated by two holes which do not pierce the entire tooth but only reach to half-way through the tooth to the pulp cavity. A perpendicular hole from the top of the tooth was then drilled

and linked the two transverse holes which produced a U-shaped hole. Thus, from the obverse side of the tooth, no holes can be seen. (See illustration). These teeth have been so heavily ground - both front and back as well as the sides - that they appear to be mere slabs of bear teeth. In fact, very little of the original enamel remains and that is on the tips and sides of the teeth. Thus, the Campbell bear teeth differ markedly from classic Hopewell examples.

There were other unique objects found by Altick. There is a small string of human teeth in the collection as well as what appears to be an awl or perforator made from an animal jaw. A bone necklace and bone tools are also included as are small drilled skull-bone pieces.

An ornament of mica is 4 1/2 inches long and carefully made, however it is not drilled. Although mica objects are also found in Adena mounds, they are considered hallmark objects of Hopewell.

Completing the collection is a six-inch pear shaped blade. It is well-chipped but is obviously some kind of tool since it is thicker and heavier than Hopewell cache blades.

This interesting collection differs from some of the classic material excavated from typical Hopewell sites in the Scioto Valley of southern Ohio. Nevertheless, it appears to be representative of a branch of the Ohio Hopewell culture unique to the west-central Ohio area.

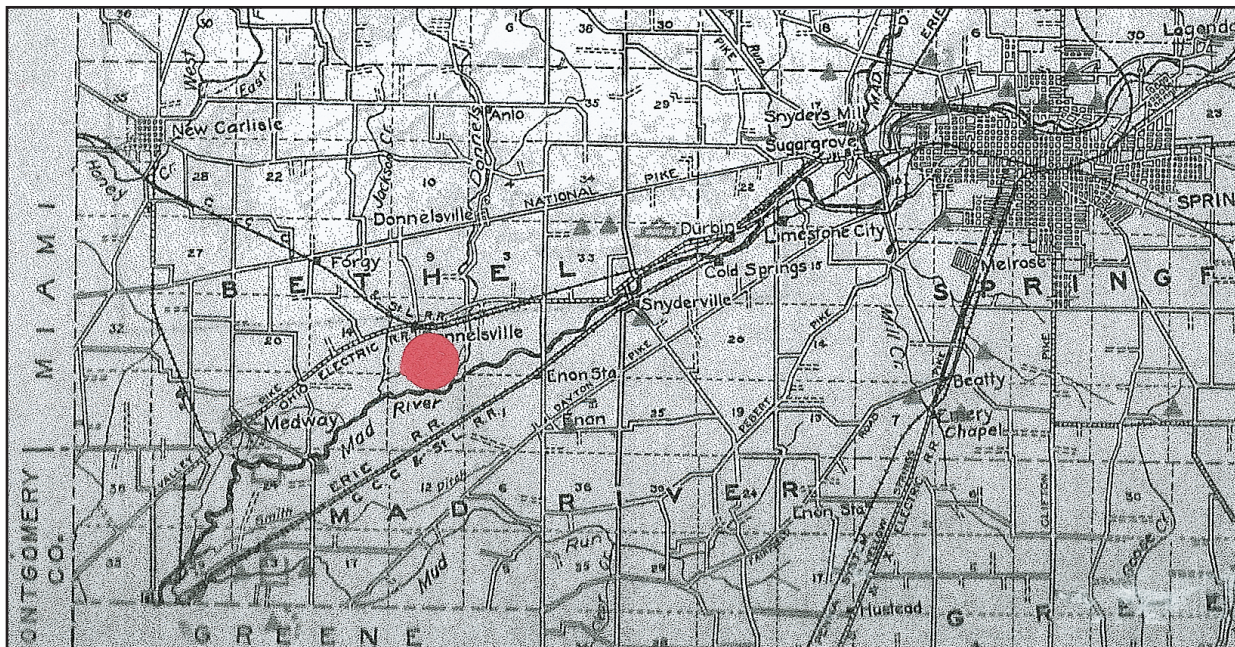


Chart 1
(Converse)
Map of Clark
County showing
location of
Campbell Mound.



Figure 1 (Converse) Drilled bear teeth from the Campbell Mound. All examples have been ground flat which removed most of the enamel. Interestingly, five of the teeth — top row — are “right-handed” while the balance are “left-handed”.

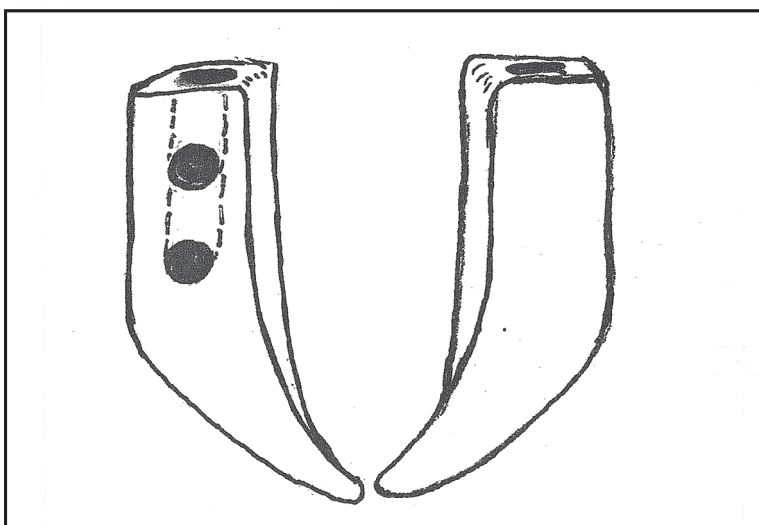


Illustration 1
(Converse)
Drawing showing
Hopewell method
of drilling bear
teeth.



Figure 2 (Converse) Ground and polished skull section, human tooth necklace, jaw-bone awl and other bone and antler objects.



Figure 3 (Converse) Undrilled mica plate which may have served as a mirror.



Figure 4 (Converse) Six-inch long flint tool made of Indiana hornstone.



Figure 5
(Converse) Pieces
of skull bones
drilled for
suspension.